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## REVIEWS

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*Social Organization, a Study of the Larger Mind.* By CHARLES HORTON COOLEY. New York: Scribners, 1909. Pp. xvii+426.

Designed from the standpoint of method to place in a larger setting the social person treated in the author's *Human Nature and the Social Order*, this second volume is even more striking as a survey of modern society in Western Europe and the United States. In a way the book is a series of lucid and discriminating essays upon the chief social problems of the day. But it is more, for running through the whole is a theory which gives unity to a wide range of topics. The thesis worked out in the earlier volume that individual and society are both abstractions from a single life process, is reiterated and amplified in the later. To this theory is added the leading idea that organization is the clue to social evolution and the hope of future progress.

Thirty-seven chapters, grouped into five parts, deal consecutively with face-to-face groups which are described as the source of primary ideals, e. g., loyalty, truth, service, lawfulness, etc.; show how by communication these groups are unified over vast areas and how public opinion is co-operatively created by leaders and the masses; then analyze castes and classes with discussions of capitalistic ascendancy, organization of workers, the problem of poverty and the character of class hostility; next define institutions in relation to individuals, to progress, and to disorganization with special reference to the family, the church, business, education, and art; and finally treat the public will as a slowly emerging force, finding only partial expression in government, and groping toward a more rational guidance of social evolution. Within the limits of a survey so comprehensive scores of social situations are legitimately mentioned, used by way of illustration, or discussed. There are no ideas which could be called striking, and few if any that are new or original, but they all gain clearness and meaning from the setting in which they are placed. This is not to deny to the author freshness of treatment and charm of style. His manifest aim is not research

but the organization of ideas more or less familiar. His English recalls Bagehot and Balfour rather than Spencer and Ward.

Professor Cooley is emphatic about the nature of the public mind and of public opinion. "Descartes might have said we think, *cogitamus*, on as good grounds as he said *cogito*" (p. 9). One should not be disturbed by differences, dissensions, and conflicts in social groups, or look for identity, like-mindedness, constant consensus. "The unity of the social mind consists not in agreement but in organization" (p. 4), although in order that minds may influence each other and so co-operate there must of course be an underlying likeness of nature. "That all minds are different is a condition, not an obstacle to the unity that consists in a differentiated and co-operative life" (p. 11). This is a frank way of meeting the common objection that the social mind never achieves more than a partial unanimity, is often a majority lording it over a minority. Consciousness is said to have three phases: self-consciousness or what I think of myself; social consciousness (in its individual aspect) or what I think of other people; and public consciousness, or a collective view of the foregoing as organized in a communicating group" (p. 12). It is hard to see where this third form would have its seat. There seems to be danger of objectifying such a concept until it becomes a thing abstract and lifeless. It reminds one of the *Zeitgeist* and other elusive notions of the early *Völkerpsychologie*. If Professor Cooley regards this "collective view" as a phase of personal consciousness the terms are not happy and are open to the charge of vagueness.

While Professor Cooley is in close accord with contemporary psychological sociology, he differs suggestively at several points in his interpretations. He is for example not at all impressed by the distinction insisted upon by Tarde and adopted heartily by Ross, between tradition and convention. It is only the rapidity of modern communication which seems to create this contrast between "looking backward" and "looking sideways." Within a group a tradition is also a convention, and conventions must also be traditions (p. 337). As to the relative susceptibility of rural and urban populations to the crowd influence, Professor Cooley takes issue squarely with Ross. The former regards country-folk as more easily swept away by the mob spirit. Ross declares the city crowd is less likely to keep its head.<sup>1</sup> Again Professor Cooley objects to the view that

<sup>1</sup> *Social Psychology*, p. 58.

the person has gradually developed out of the group in which he was originally wholly submerged. "There was never a time when, as we sometimes read, 'personality emerged'" (p. 111). This is to confuse a subordination to group organization with all lack of self-assertion, declares the author. Poverty is described as unfitness, but "in a social and not a biological sense" (p. 296). It is the well-to-do classes that are biologically unfit (p. 295). The idea of an average or commonplace mind—a "mean between the higher and lower intelligence making up the group" (p. 123)—seems to Professor Cooley fallacious. To suppose that any average opinion can be struck at a given time with regard to a question of current moment is, it is true, absurd. Leadership, prestige, and suggestion do not function in such fashion. But surely Professor Cooley does not mean to deny that every enduring group tends to produce a type of habit and sentiment which represents "mores" common to the broad medial zone of the society concerned. In this sense there are in every group typical, average persons reacting to stimuli in like and predictable ways. Professor Cooley combats the "dead-level" theory which DeTocqueville associated with democracy, and which modern communication, by the rapid diffusion of uniform suggestions, is supposed to create. There are said to be "two kinds of individuality, one of isolation and one of choice—modern conditions foster the latter while they efface the former" (p. 93). That is, provincialism is doomed while the swift diffusion of countless ideas increases the chance of discovering and developing special aptitudes and latent variations.

In his discussion of classes Professor Cooley avoids on the one hand the blind complaisancy which denies their existence, and on the other the Marxian nightmare which pictures our society on the verge of a relentless class-conflict. Classes are distinguished from castes. It is the latter which might bring on revolution. So long as competition rather than inheritance determines social classification, our society is safe. Indeed, a measure of class spirit is a source of social efficiency. "The various functions of life require special influences and organization, and without some class spirit, some specialty in traditions and standards, nothing is well performed" (p. 209). The author sees as the chief protection against the menace of caste (*a*) the growth of a democratic spirit of service which pervades all classes and (*b*) the ambitions of young men who insist on opportunity to rise and resent a thwarting rigidity in the social

system. The distinction between individual freedom and class freedom makes itself increasingly apparent in American society. In the old days classes were represented as stages through which the ambitious individual rises triumphantly. Now we are beginning to realize that with us as with older societies the many must remain within the limits of a more and more rigid status and that new problems are involved. Professor Cooley states this forcefully: "The question of freedom, as applied to class conditions, has two somewhat distinct aspects: (1) Freedom to rise from one class into another; (2) freedom of classes—not opportunity to get out of them but to be something in them" (p. 246).

The author's discussion of democracy affords a typical example of the way in which he presents familiar ideas in a vivid, effective fashion. Rejecting the idea that the masses at a given time are able critically to analyze and rationally to meet complex situations, Professor Cooley describes democracy in this summary fashion: "They (the undistinguished masses of the people) contribute sentiment and common-sense, which gives momentum and general direction to progress, and, as regards particulars, finds its way by a shrewd choice of leaders" (p. 148). It would be hard to find anywhere a more compact statement of the newer interpretation of democracy. Professor Cooley displays the utmost faith in popular government and asserts that the discussion of other forms of political control has become wholly academic. He does not close his eyes however to the obstacles which democracy confronts. He shows this clearly in his calm, penetrating, and tolerant discussion of the ascendancy of the capitalist class. His treatment of this ascendancy is a singularly keen and clear piece of analysis. The subject of disorganization occupies four chapters which set forth in considerable detail the consequences of social readjustment to the rapidly shifting conditions which modern life presents. The philosophy of poverty which Professor Cooley outlines is in close accord with the recently published lectures of Professor Devine on the "Causes of Misery." By both men a large percentage of responsibility is shifted from the individual to society, and the need for better adjustment and organization is emphatically asserted. The reader cannot fail to be impressed by the balanced judgment and tolerant spirit which Professor Cooley brings to his work. He does not falter or avoid the issue. His judgments are stated with definiteness and with courage but he never forgets that human nature is a product as well

as a factor. "Human nature, it appears, is very much the same in those we reckon sinners as in ourselves. Good and evil are always intimately bound up together; no sort of men are chiefly given over to conscious badness; and to abuse men or groups in the large is unjust and generally futile" (p. 15).

It is not easy to sum up in a paragraph the purpose and value of a book like *Social Organization*. It is not primarily a textbook, although it will prove valuable as collateral reading in courses on social theory. It lacks on the one hand the technical arrangement and apparatus for the work of the classroom, and on the other the "source" material now so much in demand to supplement library facilities. Nor can the volume be regarded as research in social psychology or psychological sociology. This statement should perhaps be qualified to this extent. As an illuminating organization of material generally familiar it does constitute a contribution. The chief service of the book will be to present to reflective readers who are likely to be repelled by technical sociology a clear and convincing interpretation of modern life in terms of the new psychology, personal and social. In his two volumes *Human Nature and the Social Order* and *Social Organization* Professor Cooley has given to the public the best statement of the newer social philosophy that has yet been written. For this service he deserves the gratitude not only of intelligent lay readers but of professional psychologists and sociologists as well.

GEORGE E. VINCENT

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*The Ethics of Progress, or the Theory and the Practice by Which Civilization Proceeds.* By CHARLES F. DOLE. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1909. Pp. 398. \$1.50.

Dr. Dole is among our most enlightened and enlightening preachers of righteousness. It would be hard to find anything in his writings which is not, "for substance of doctrine," wholesome. The present book is not only no exception, but it is an evident illustration of the rule. Everything in it, beginning with Part III, would do good in the hands of men of the college age or older, in or out of college, who were intelligent enough to read it. Nevertheless I have somewhat against the reasoning in Parts I and II.